

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 and 30-32 are pending in this application.

Non-elected claims 17-29 have been cancelled without prejudice to the filing of a divisional application directed to the subject matter thereof.

The subject matter of allowable claim 3 has been incorporated into claim 1 to put it in independent form. According, claim 3 has been cancelled and claim 5 has been amended to correct its dependency. New independent claims 30-32 correspond to allowable claims 11, 12 and 14, respectively. Therefore, all of these claims are supported by the original claims, and no new matter has been added by way of these amendments. Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 4, 7, 9, 10, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,281,550 to Erikson. The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7-10, 13, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,566,265 to Esashi. The Examiner also has rejected claims 1, 4, 7, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,164,920 to Bast. The Examiner also has rejected claims 1, 4, 7, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 02-051289 to Ohara.

The Examiner's rejections and arguments in support thereof have been considered by the Applicants. Although they do not necessarily agree, the rejections have been rendered moot, because the allowable subject matter of claim 3 has been incorporated into claim 1 and all of the rejected claims depend directly or indirectly from claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

Objection

The Examiner has rejected claims 3, 5, 11, 12, and 14 as being dependent on a rejected claim, but these claims are otherwise allowable.

Because, the allowable subject matter of claim 3 is incorporated into claim 1, the objection has been rendered moot. Also, claims 11, 12 and 14 are rewritten in independent form as new claims 30, 31, and 32 respectively.

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It is believed that all of the claims are patentably distinct from the cited prior art and are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and a notice of allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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